

MINUTES OF IWCC MEDICAL FEE ADVISORY BOARD
HELD ON JUNE 1, 2006

Present at the meeting were:

Chairman Dennis Ruth
Ms. Maddy Bowling, Employer Representative
Ms. Elena Butkus, Medical Provider Representative
Mr. Eric Dean, Employee Representative
Dr. Edward Sclamberg, Medical Provider Representative
Mr. John Smolk, Employer Representative
Kathryn Tazic, Employer Representative

Chairman Ruth called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Copies of public comments and responses from the IWCC to the JCAR committee, and presentation materials from NCCI were distributed. Additionally, draft medical forms discussed at previous advisory board meetings and a fax copy of correspondence regarding provider payment from Ms. Butkus were distributed. A transcript of the meeting was taken.

The Chairman explained JCAR procedures regarding the rule-making process. He discussed some comments submitted to the Commission and the Commission's responses submitted to JCAR. The Chairman noted that no substantive changes were made to the rules, and that most changes were technical in nature.

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the minutes of the Commission meeting held on March 6, 2006 were approved as presented.

The board engaged in further discussion regarding the Commission's comments regarding out-of-state coverage, and also the Commission's ability to develop a fee schedule for out-of-state providers. It was noted that out-of-state costs and access should be closely monitored in the future based on important factors including good access, reasonable costs and adequate provider compensation.

The Chairman noted that medical fee schedule project manager Glen Boyle has continued to research data from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and from other sources in an effort to assist with creating the hospital outpatient fee schedule, though most sources have lacked adequate information. He added that Ingenix may have data available for use in further developing a hospital outpatient fee schedule. The Chairman noted that the Advisory Board would be informed of discussions with Ingenix regarding the use of this data.

The Chairman stated that NCCI recently released a ratings analysis of the new medical fee schedule. The Chairman noted his disagreement with NCCI's findings, because their finding that the fee schedule would only provide minimal cost savings for businesses was based on their inability to properly analyze the data.

The Chairman suggested that a joint meeting be held with the IWCC Medical Fee Advisory Board and the IWCC Advisory Board to participate in a presentation from NCCI and to further discuss NCCI's analysis.

The board then discussed the need to conduct an unbiased analysis of the fee schedule by a reputable organization knowledgeable about workers' compensation issues within a given time period.

Next the board discussed the issue of balance billing, disputed bills, and medical provider payment policies. The Chairman noted that there is a great deal of misinformation regarding the medical fee schedule, and stated that frequently asked questions and answers regarding the medical fee schedule were posted on the IWCC web site.

Ms. Butkus stated that it is imperative the medical forms be finalized and indicated her organization, the Illinois Hospital Association, was currently reviewing the forms and she would forward draft copies to the board shortly for review.

After discussing the intent of the statute regarding provider payment of the lesser of medical fee schedule rates compared to previously set contractual rates by insurance companies, the board also decided the IWCC should set policy indicating the intention of the statute regarding this issue. It was decided that members of the board would discuss these issues outside of the board meeting and present draft policies for the board to review at the next meeting.

Additionally, Dr. Sclamberg voiced his concerns on behalf of the medical community regarding global billing requirements and multiple procedure payment. The Chairman noted that access issues regarding multiple procedure payment would also be closely monitored in the future.

The board decided to hold a joint meeting with the IWCC Advisory Board on June 27 at 1:30 p.m. in the oral argument room at the IWCC Chicago office. Questions from the public were not heard, and instead were deferred to the upcoming joint meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.